

C. Zerubavel file



THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

1230 YORK AVENUE

NEW YORK, NY 10021

January 29, 1980

JOSHUA LEDERBERG

PRESIDENT

Dr. Eviatar Zerubavel
Western Psychiatric Institute
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260

Dear Dr. Zerubavel:

Thank you for your reprint on private and public time. I found it interesting to read, and as an extension of Moore's analysis. But your reference to Merton 1968 is not a sufficient pointer to that huge volume. (I was to have dined with him this evening but I have a lingering flu that it was better to respect. I know he is still interested in "time-bound social phenomena" -- we had some, by no means exhaustive, discussion of the meaning of a (political) "honeymoon," and of the "lame duck").

As to the paper, I have little to add, but the hope that the analysis will continue, and still more deeply.

You do talk about "bureaucratization" of a profession as related to the erosion of ever-availability. I am not sure I understand "bureaucratization". 35 years ago it was commonplace for graduate students to be in their labs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Is the shift to hedonic values what you mean by "bureaucratization"? It would be interesting to get more quantitative data on accessibility, and over a period of time. Do time budgets show this?

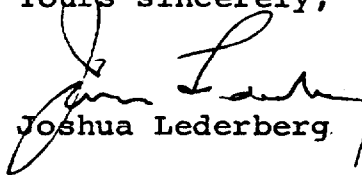
My present institutional role certainly does expose me to being scheduled day and night, to a degree I could never have predicted (and you would be right to guess this is one of the sources of my interest). I suppose it is hard to get around "socially perceived indispensability"; but a great deal of that is indeed ceremonial. There are some distinctions between that and the exigencies of real responsibility which apply to all statuses of command but which rest on the physician in purer form. Do you think nurses would hesitate an instant to extend their duty hours in a truly life-threatening emergency?

Dr. Eviatar Zerubavel
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- 2 -

At 39 you agree that private-public is a continuing;
but do you attempt to define the poles? I am alone now,
but am penning a draft to you. A while ago, I was reading
your reprint. How much less private if you had been in
proximate discourse? behind a one-way glass? on the tele-
phone? Is the person ever totally abstracted from a social
milieu?

Yours sincerely,



Joshua Lederberg

bcc: R.K. Mitter